國際學碩士學位論文

Depopulation and Chinese Migration in the Russian Far East :

the Link between Receiving and Sending Countries

러시아 극동지역의 인구감소와 중국인 이주 : 수용국과 송출국간의 연결

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徐 殷 源

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Abstract

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Since the opening of the Russo-Sino border in the 1990s, Chinese has started to move into the Russian Far East. The increasing Chinese migration to the Russian Far East has been spoken of in warning tones mainly by Russian politicians and the media. In fact, there was no reliable evidence supporting the warning described as the 'Yellow Peril'. Nevertheless, the great population differential between the Russian Far East and Northeastern China was exaggerated mostly by the Russian side, saying that there would be a massive Chinese infiltration to the contiguous Russian territories. This study aims at a fundamental question: Why do Chinese people enter the Russian Far East? The question has previously been overwhelmingly considered only from the perspective of the receiving country. However, both the receiving and sending countries should be considered in resolving this question and understanding the topic comprehensively. As a receiving country, the Russian Far East has been pulling its labor force from abroad since the collapse of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, as a sending county, Northeast China has enjoyed a favorable environment for migration since the economic reform in the 1990s. However, the push and pull factors in Chinese migration to the Russian Far East have failed to satisfy each other, so far.

Keywords : the Russian Far East, Depopulation, Chinese Migration, Yellow Peril

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

1. Introduction

1.1. Literature Review

Since the opening of the Russo-Sino border in the 1990s, Chinese has started to move into the Russian Far East. The increasing Chinese migration to the Russian Far East has been spoken of in warning tones mainly by Russian politicians and the media. Yevgeny Nazdratenko, the former governor of Primorsky Krai from 1993 to 2001, expressed caution that Chinese migration could turn the Russian Far East into the 'Asian Balkans' (Alexseev, 2004). The Russian press have described how Chinese enterprises will conquer the Russian market and take economic opportunities from local residents in the region (Novak, 2003). Victor Larin founded more than 150 articles in the Primorsky and Russian press from 1993 to 1995 that mentioned these threats while providing no empirical evidence on this issue (Alexseev, 2004). Moreover, it is symbolic that the Russian president Vladimir Putin warned in 2000 that if Russian people do not take practical steps to advance the Far East soon, after a few decades, the Russian population will be speaking Japanese, Chinese, and Korean in a speech to residents of Blagoveshchensk (Alexseev, 2006). Naturally, the issue of Chinese migration has received a lot of attention from Russian politicians and the public at large. In addition, it was a widespread rumor that the Chinese would not only take local residents' jobs, but also threaten public order, the environment, as well as encourage racial intermarriage. However, academic research and analysis on the issue was not

conducted until the late 1990s (Gelbras, 2002)[1].

Studies on this issue started with accurate quantifying of the number of Chinese migration in the border regions. In fact, there was no reliable evidence supporting the warning described as the 'Chinese Invasion' or 'Yellow Peril' that the Russian media and politicians often gave. For instance, *Izvestia* reported in 1993 that there were two million Chinese in the Russian Far East and, in 1998, the Ussuriysk administration and a frontier officer said that a couple of million Chinese already occupy Primorsky Krai (Zayonchkovskaya, 2005). A report on the social situation in the Far Eastern districts prepared for the Russian Federation Council in 2002 stated that approximately one million Chinese resided illegally in the district (Gelbras, 2002). Moreover, it is far worse when we see the future perspectives that the Russian press are expecting. On August 14, 2002, Russia's mainstream daily newspaper, *Gazeta* reported that by 2050 the Chinese will become Russia's second largest ethnic group (Alexseev, 2006).

However, according to recent academic research, these figures seem to be quite exaggerated. In 1999, Gelbras estimated that the number of Chinese migration in Khabarovsk, Vladivostok and Ussuriysk, did not exceed 20,000 (Gelbras, 2002). Larin guessed that the Russian Far East has 25,000-30,000 Chinese, including 10,000-12,000 contract workers, 10,000-15,000 traders, hundreds of students and medium-scale businessmen. He also added that the total annual percentage of Chinese workers employed in the Russian Far East has never exceeded 0.2 percent of the total labor force,

[1] Vilya Gelbras says, Galina Vitkovskaya and Zhanna Zayonchkovskaya for the first time carried out research on Chinese migration in 1997-98.

and even if we include illegal Chinese workers, it would be less than 0.5 percent of regional employment (Larin, 2005). Vladimir Portyakov also wrote that approximately 25,000-30,000 Chinese lived in the Far East during 2004-2005 (Portyakov, 2006). Moreover, Herman Pirchner argues that in 2001, the number of Chinese in Russia's border regions was closer to 134,000 based upon his field work and interviews and it appeared much smaller when he revisited the regions in 2007 (Pirchner, 2008). There are discrepancies in the numbers of the Chinese migrants because it is difficult to precisely quantify the number of Chinese who live, work and transit in the Russian Far East. Nevertheless, the number of Chinese migrants is relatively much less than the number the Russian media and politicians have frequently claimed.

In this sense, Mikhail Alexseev devoted a lot of time to figuring out the truth behind these exaggerated perceptions and the hostile behavior directed against Chinese migration. He analyzes how immigration phobia operates in most receiving countries and takes the Russian Far East as an example, explaining that revisited 'Yellow Peril' is exaggerated (Alexseev, 2006). In addition, several analysts, both in Russia and China, criticized the Russian media for exaggerating the scale of Chinese migration, influencing public opinion and political strategies (Balzer & Repnikova, 2010). The Chinese government and academic institutions also insist that the actual number of Chinese migration in Russia is very small and there has never been a massive wave of Chinese migrants to Russia (Ma, 2008).

The number of Chinese migrants known to people is still in some doubt but with a

firm effort directed toward examining the issue objectively, points of view regarding the topic have been balanced and the main stream of studies has seen a move from security, demography, and politics, to economic collaboration and regional cooperation. Jonathan Sullivan and Bettina Renz discovered that economic and regional development issues appear to be the most salient aspects of the Russian Far East and Chinese North East relations in national and regional media in both countries and this implies a significant change particularly on the Russian side (Sullivan & Renz, 2010). The fear of 'Yellow Peril' has been gradually alleviated and the attitude toward Chinese migration in Russia has been transformed. Social scientists, journalist and politicians have begun to consider Chinese immigration as a natural and inevitable consequence, suggesting that the process can be harnessed to exploit the tremendous resources east of the Urals (Kontorovich, 2002).

There are some suggestions that the Russian government has to modify its stance toward Chinese migrants and utilize their manpower. Sergei Prosvirnov proposed that Chinese workers substitute the small number of local labor force in the Russian Far East. He temporarily concluded that Chinese migration would be the only solution to resolve the depopulation problem affecting the region (Prosvirnov, 2009). Also, Gelbras recommended establishing a proper form of incorporation, to develop legal regulations and to ensure effective protection of foreign workers' rights if the Russian government wants to supplement the labor shortage with foreign workers (Gelbras, 2002). Ma pointed out that Chinese commercial activities considerably contributed to regional

economies. He argues that if the Russian government continues to misinterpret Chinese migration to the territory, it will become much more difficult to develop the region and integrate it into the East Asian regional economy (Ma, 2008). Balzer and Repnikova mentioned that the Russian Far East is not a favored destination for Chinese migrants, rather Russia failed to develop sustainable economic and labor market links with China when conditions favored these projects (Balzer & Repnikova, 2010).

Earlier studies concerning Chinese migration in the Russian Far East have mostly focused on how many Chinese came into the region from the point of view of the receiving country, along with government policies and social problems. However, those have been not sufficient to link the 'pull and push' factors of both the receiving and sending sides with an explanation as to why Chinese migration into the Russian Far East is still much more inactive than Russian media portrays or why the common people are so anxious. It is obvious that the attractiveness of the Russian territory for migrants is determined by geopolitical and socio-economic factors (Kozykina & Sizikova, 2009). Consequently, to understand this issue clearly, we should examine the situation of Chinese inflow to the Russian Far East with an objective analysis of the data, as far as possible, and then find out the motivations and obstacles from this established position.

1.2. Research Question and Purpose

This study aims at a fundamental question: Why do Chinese people enter the Russian Far East? As I mentioned above, the question has previously been overwhelmingly considered only from the perspective of the receiving country.

However, both the receiving and sending countries should be considered in resolving this question and understanding the topic comprehensively. Thus, the study will deal with both countries of origin and destination, examining what factors affect the migration flow and how the overall stream operates. Answering the question will help us broaden our view on Chinese migration, highlight possible implications of the depopulation phenomenon occurring in the Russia Far East as well as provide some ideas for resolving the problem.

1.3. Research Methodology and Scope

Migration is defined broadly as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence (Lee, 1966)[2], which is a social phenomenon caused by a variety of economic, political and social dimensions. Owing to inherent complex characteristics, it is difficult to explicate the migration with only one theory or model. Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino and Tayler attempted to build a single body of theories, saying that "there is no single, coherent theory of international migration, only a fragmented set of theories that have developed largely in isolation from one another, sometimes but not always segmented by disciplinary boundaries" (Massey et al., 1993). Each migration, therefore, is different according to the regional conditions in which it occurs.

In terms of the receiving country, Russia is suffering from chronic depopulation

[2] Lee does not include all kinds of spatial mobility in this definition; for instance, the continual movements of nomads and migratory workers, for whom there is no long-term residence, and temporary moves like those to the mountains for the summer. However, government statistics used in this study include temporary and seasonal migratory workers such as those who leave Russia for their visa renewal and reenter the territory.

and a shortage of workforce. Russian politicians, scholars and mass media have been worried about these structural problems worsening the regional economy for a long time and some of them suggest that it should be substituted by foreign labor - including Chinese workers. In this sense, increasing demand for labor force in Russia is already pulling foreign labor from neighboring countries. A structural approach is crucial to understand the current migration phenomenon in Russian territories, especially in the Russian Far East. It helps us establish a concept of distributions of foreign workers, patterns of migration and the significant migration impetus in Russia. Nevertheless, immigration in Russia is still at an early stage due to restrictive government policies, immigration phobia and an inherent industrial structure, limiting the number of migrants to Russia.

On the other hand, determining the factors of emigration from China is more diverse and complex. Therefore, it is essential that we outline the pattern of Chinese emigration to the world and figure out what factors play an important role in this particular stream. There are three major aspects to consider: individual decision-making, institutional changes and Chinese social networks abroad. First, individual decision-making is a distinctly significant factor to understand why they migrate. Searching for better living standards, job opportunities and social deprivation should be considered in this context. Second, institutional reforms played a crucial role in increasing mobility from China (Biao, 2007). Over the last twenty years, the Chinese government has been decoupling emigration and politics, regarding the issue as an apolitical and neutral

matter (Biao, 2003). Owing to the trend toward 'neutralization', a favorable environment for Chinese emigration has been created. Hence, observing the institutional changes will help us to understand the backdrop of Chinese emigration. Third, Chinese communities in receiving countries are closely related to the next Chinese migration inflow. International Chinese migration tends to follow networks formed by kin and home-locality connections (Wickberg, 1994). The most concentrated destinations for overseas Chinese are Asian countries such as Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia in which Chinese communities have been well developed (Shen, 2010). Mette Thunø and Frank Pieke investigated Chinese emigration from Fujian to Europe, a province on the southeast coast of China, and found out that new migration in the initial phase draws on networks or histories of previous migration, which are indispensable for further migration (Thunø & Pieke, 2005). For Italy, one of the major destinations for overseas Chinese in Western Europe, newly arrived Chinese were employed in workshops where the owner and the workers were Chinese performing manufacturing tasks for Italian businesses (Ceccagno, 2003). Thus, Chinese networks abroad should be dealt with to figure out the possibility of increasing migration.

In this context, I will draw on two regions for the study: the Russian Far East and Northeast China. This is because cross-border migration from the three adjoining Chinese provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning to contiguous Russian territories has stood at the center of this issue since the early 1990s. Transnational migration will occur when the migration mechanism in both the sending and receiving regions are

strongly correlated. In contrast, if there are ‘intervening obstacles’ to prevent transnational migration streams, the flow will be slow and go toward other destinations. To ascertain this, official government statistics, data produced by international organizations and lots of secondary data has been utilized. Official statistics will be a fundamental source but the difficulty in counting transnational migrants and different methodologies make the figures dissimilar from each other. Hence, the secondary data could complement incorrect or missing data. Survey and fieldwork conducted by other scholars will also provide valuable material for this study.

2. International Migration in the Russian Federation

2.1. Overview of International Migration in the Russian Federation

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the problem of immigration into Russian territories has been of great worry to Russian politicians, scholars and the media, insisting that it threatens their national security, interest and identity. The United Nations Population Division ranked the Russian Federation (12.8 million) second to the United States (42.8 million) in the list of countries with the largest numbers of immigrants in 2010 (*International Migration 2009*). The Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalization and Poverty provided a dataset based on the 2000 round of censuses (DRC, 2007).[3] According to the two origin-destination matrices for 226 countries and territories, approximately 12 million migrants (2nd in the world) came to the Russian Federation and 12.1 million people (1st in the world) left from the country.[4] Russia acts not only as a receiving country, but also as a sending and transit country. However, transnational migration in Russia is intensively concentrated on the former Soviet republics, which means that the vital migration flows reflect the changed geopolitical status, rather than international migration all over the world (*Migration in the Russian Federation: A Country Profile 2008*). Major sending countries to Russia were the Commonwealth of Independent States and Baltic countries, accounting for 96% of the

[3] Data for Russian Federation was compiled by Population Census of 2002 (Parsons, Skeldon, Walmsley, & Winters, 2007).

[4] The data provides an estimate of the cumulative migration into an area, not the flow of migration at a specific period of time. At present, no global source exists for flow data in specific periods of time (Parsons et al., 2007).

total immigrants. On the other hand, the CIS and Baltic countries were destinations where 76% of the total emigrants arrived from Russia, with other favorable destinations such as the United States (3%) and Germany (3%). Meanwhile, the database recorded that there were almost 20,000 Chinese (0.02%) in Russian territories.

Russian Federation statistics on migration were traditionally presented by two main sources of data – the Population Census and current statistics of migration flows based on administrative record data (Antonova, 2006). In this sense, the All-Russia Population Census conducted in 2002, after the last Soviet Census of 1989, is important to figure out international migration stocks and its composition in the Russian Federation.

Table 1. Place of Birth

Total Population	**145166731**	**100.00%**
Russian Federation	131608720	90.66%
Foreign countries including:	11976822	8.25%
the CIS countries	11254511	7.75%
the Baltic countries	256119	0.18%
other countries of the world	466192	0.32%
Territories not shown above	1581189	1.09%

Source: All-Russia Population Census of 2002

Table 2. Population by Citizenship

Total population	**145166731**	**100.00%**
Russian citizens	142442404	98.12%
Foreign citizens including:	1025413	0.71%
the CIS countries	906314	0.62%
other countries of the world	119099	0.08%
China	30598	0.02%
no citizenship	429891	0.30%
citizenship is not stated	1269023	0.87%

Source: All-Russia Population Census of 2002

Data on place of birth shows that immigrants to the Russian Federation are overwhelmingly from the former Soviet republics, accounting for about 8 percent of the total population. In addition, the great difference in the number of CIS migrants between the two tables implies that a large number of people born in CIS countries acquired Russian citizenship during the first decade of the post-Soviet era. However, it is difficult to regard those who moved to the Russian Federation before the collapse of the Soviet Union as international migrants (Antonova, 2006). The Soviet Union already had considerable internal mobility as a country and the foreign-born migrants remained in the country where they had lived, not their native country, even after the dissolution of the Soviet Union (Winters, 2007). Thus, immigrants in Russia consist mainly of those from CIS countries but it is difficult to truly ascertain the stream of international

migration in the published Population Census data.

Russian national statistics also provide data on international migration based on the processing of primary forms of arrival and departure each year, which are filled in registration or deregistration of the population at the place of residence (*The Demographic Yearbook of Russia 2010*). The methodology is quite different from that used in the Census such as DRC database, which includes both the de facto and de jure population at the time of the census.[5] Nevertheless, current statistics of migration flows based on the administrative record data offer a broad picture of changes in the migration stream in Russia and its characteristics.

[5] The de facto population indicates those physically present in a country, while the de jure population indicates those who are usually resident or those who qualify as legally resident at the time of the census (Parsons et al., 2007).

Table 3. International Migration in the Russian Federation (in thousands)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Arrivals to Russia	**359.3**	**193.5**	**184.6**	**129.1**	**119.2**	**177.2**	**186.4**	**287.0**	**281.6**	**279.9**
CIS countries	346.8	183.7	175.1	119.7	110.4	168.6	177.7	273.9	270.0	261.5
other countries	12.6	9.8	9.5	9.5	8.8	8.6	8.7	13.1	11.6	18.4
China	1.1	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.5	1.7	1.2	0.8
Departures from Russia	**145.7**	**121.2**	**106.7**	**94.0**	**79.8**	**69.8**	**54.1**	**47.0**	**39.5**	**32.5**
CIS countries	82.3	61.6	52.1	46.1	37.0	36.1	35.3	31.3	26.1	20.3
other countries	63.4	59.6	54.6	47.9	42.8	33.7	18.8	15.7	13.4	12.1
China	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Net migration	**213.6**	**72.3**	**77.9**	**35.1**	**39.4**	**107.4**	**132.3**	**239.9**	**242.1**	**247.4**
CIS countries	264.5	122.1	123.0	73.6	73.4	132.5	142.4	242.5	243.9	241.2
other countries	-50.9	-49.8	-45.0	-38.5	-34.0	-25.1	-10.1	-2.6	-1.8	6.3
China	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.3	1.6	1.1	0.7

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Russia 2010[6]

Since the early 1990s, positive net transnational migration has compensated for the decreasing national population in Russia and the CIS countries have been key players in this circumstance.[7] The overall result is consistent with the figures of international organizations, except the absolute number of migrants. Still, migrants from non-CIS countries, including China, appear to be insignificant in Russian national

[6] Georgia was classified as a non-CIS country in the 2009 record because the country announced withdrawal from CIS members in August 2009.

[7] Net transnational migration in Russia was also positive during the period 1991-2000 (*Statistical Yearbook of Russia 2001*)

statistics. However, it should be observed that Russian national statistics can not capture all foreign migrants because the statistics have certain limitations[8] and the number of immigrants work and reside illegally in Russian territories.

Russia's previous national statistics data show that the total number of immigrants to Russia in 1992-2001 was 10.7 million, including 6.5 million officially registered as 'arrived for permanent residence', 1.2 million refugees, and 3 million non-status immigrants (Ivakhniouk, 2004). In practice, most refugees and forced migrants were the product of geopolitical changes in 1991. However, political and ethnic factors lost their significance in stimulating emigration from countries of origin after the mid-1990s as political situations stabilized in many post-Soviet states and favorable governmental polices towards minorities were carried out (Korobkov & Zayonchkovskaya, 2004). The figures of refugees and forced migrants have gradually decreased over the last two decades and become a less important component of the current migration stream (*Statistical Yearbook of Russia 2010*). Moreover, the procedure for the acquisition of nationality in the Russian Federation has been simplified (*Migration in the Russian Federation: A Country Profile 2008*), helping non-status immigrants to obtain Russian citizenship. Meanwhile, labor migration has become a distinctive feature of the international migration phenomenon in Russia since 2000.

[8] For example, there is no clear definition regarding duration of stay and place of residence in statistics on migration. Thus, if people are registered in a place of dwelling (not residence), they would not be included in statistics, although the period of dwelling may last longer than one year (Antonova, 2006).

2.2. Characteristics of Immigration in the Russian Federation

As mentioned above, the most impressive feature of the current immigration in the Russian Federation is that the number of foreign workers has dramatically increased during the last decade.

Table 4. Foreign workers in the Russian Federation by main countries of origin (in thousands)[9]

`	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total	**213.3**	**283.7**	**359.5**	**377.9**	**460.4**	**702.5**	**1014.0**	**1717.1**	**2425.9**
CIS countries	**106.4**	**148.6**	**204.6***	**180.5**	**221.9**	**343.7**	**537.7**	**1152.8**	**1780.0**
Azerbaijan	3.3	4.4	15.0	6.0	9.8	17.3	28.3	57.6	76.3
Armenia	5.5	8.5	12.6	10.0	17.0	26.2	39.8	73.4	100.1
Georgia	5.2	5.0	6.8	3.2	3.8	4.3	4.9	4.8	4.2
Kazakhstan	2.9	3.6	7.6	4.0	4.3	4.1	5.0	7.6	10.4
Kyrgyzstan	0.9	1.7	6.4	4.8	8.0	16.2	33.0	109.6	184.6
Moldova	11.9	13.3	40.7	21.5	22.7	30.6	51.0	93.7	122.0
Tajikistan	6.2	10.0	16.8	13.6	23.3	52.6	98.7	250.2	391.4
Turkmenistan	0.2	0.1	7.0	0.2	0.3	1.5	0.7	2.1	3.1
Uzbekistan	6.1	10.1	15.5	14.6	24.1	49.0	105.1	344.6	642.7
Ukraine	64.1	91.9	61.0	102.6	108.6	141.8	171.3	209.3	245.3
other countries	**106.9**	**135.1**	**154.9**	**197.4**	**238.5**	**358.7**	**476.1**	**563.8**	**645.0**
Vietnam	13.3	20.1	26.7	35.2	41.8	55.6	69.1	79.8	95.2
China	26.2	38.6	38.7	72.8	94.1	160.6	210.8	228.8	281.7
DPRK	8.7	9.9	12.7	13.2	14.7	20.1	27.7	32.6	34.9
Turkey	17.8	20.9	15.4	37.9	48.0	73.7	101.4	131.2	130.5

Source: Labour and Employment in Russia 2009

[9] Since the data of 2002 and 2003 was not involved in Labour and Employment in Russia 2009, I added that which was presented in the 2005 edition. Also, in the category of other countries I selected 4 countries that have a relatively high proportion of foreign workers in Russia.

* The figure seems to be an error because the sum of foreign workers in each CIS country is 189.4

According to national statistics, in the 1990s there was already a foreign labor inflow from the former Soviet republics, the former Yugoslav countries, Turkey, China, North Korea and more. These figures were at a stable level of about 100-300 thousand foreign workers (*Labour and Employment in Russia 2001*).

Table 5. Population stayed temporarily on the territory of the Russian Federation according to purpose of arrival and age groups

	Total	including at age			age not stated
		under working	working	over working	
purpose of arrival:	**239018**	**11634**	**209765**	**12994**	**4625**
work	**156317**	2063	149243	3055	1956
business trip	**13542**	106	12463	771	202
tourism, recreation and treatment	**26537**	2559	18313	5025	640
transit migration	**2677**	329	2208	95	45
other purposes	**37668**	6324	26552	3983	809
not stated purpose of arrival	**2277**	253	986	65	973

Source: All-Russia Population Census of 2002

The All-Russia Population Census of 2002 asked those who had permanent residence abroad and stayed temporarily on the territory of the Russian Federation about the purpose of their arrival. Among about 240 thousand respondents, 65% of the total answered that they came to work in Russia, mostly working-age foreigners. We can infer that similar tendencies exist through the latest statistics. The Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation reported in 2009 that approximately 13.4 million foreigners

journeying to Russia arrived for personal reasons, while 3.9 and 2.1 million foreigners arrived for official reasons and tourism, respectively (*Population Size and Migration in the Russian Federation in 2009*).[10] It is unclear how many foreigners among those who came for personal reasons are working in Russia but it is understandable that a number of foreigners are crossing the border of Russia to find a job and make money.

It should also be noticed that the large number of arrivals and departures occurred for just one year. High mobility is another important characteristic of migration. It can be inferred from the pattern of residence and age composition of migrants. According to the Federal Migration Service, 43,828 residence permits were issued in 2004 and the number decreased year by year, falling by about 12,000 in 2007. In contrast, roughly 170,000 temporary residence permits were issued, increasing from 120,756 in 2004 (*Migration in the Russian Federation: A Country Profile 2008*). The relatively low number of permanent residence may indicate a highly mobile migration flow itself, but expensive housing prices, complicated procedures for residence permits and visa renewal should also be considered as causes for their tendency to temporary stay.

In terms of age composition, current international migration in Russia is concentrated on working age groups mostly ranging from 20 to 49 years old.[11] For instance, about 80 percent of the total immigrants in 2009 were those who able to work and 54 percent of the total was male (*Population Size and Migration in the Russian Federation in 2009*). Those

[10] Almost the same amount of people left Russia for the same reasons. 13.7 million foreigners left the country for personal reasons, while 3.3 and 2.2 million left for official reasons and tourism.

[11] The working-age population in Russia consists of men aged 16-59 and women aged 16-54.

people are more mobile than other age groups and can work abroad to make money.

The World Bank ranks the Russian Federation fourth (18.6 billion Dollars) in the top remittance-sending countries in 2009 (*Migration and Remittances Factbook 2010*). Remittance that foreign migrants earned in Russia has been sent to their native countries and the figures increased annually before the global financial crisis in 2008. For instance, Tajikistan, a highly dependent country on external remittance (35 percent of the total GDP in 2009), has sent its unskilled workers abroad, especially to the Russian Federation.[12] Thus, the increasing outward remittance flows is consistent with the fact that foreign workers are heading for the Russian Federation.

Table 6. Remittances in the Russian Federation (US$ millions)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Inward remittance flows	**1,453**	**2,495**	**3,012**	**3,344**	**4,713**	**6,033**	**5,359**
Workers' remittances	300	925	621	766	852	802	775
Compensation of employees	814	1,206	1,807	1,899	2,613	3,792	3,326
Migrants' transfers	339	364	583	678	1,249	1,439	1,258
Outward remittance flows	**3,233**	**5,188**	**7,008**	**11,467**	**17,763**	**26,145**	**18,613**
Workers' remittances	1,306	2,672	3,051	4,587	6,942	7,264	5,927
Compensation of employees	958	1,464	2,940	6,067	9,931	17,971	12,027
Migrants' transfers	969	1,052	1,017	813	890	910	659

Source: World Bank

[12] Approximately 96 percent of the Tajik migrants chose Russia, where 55 percent work in the construction sector, but also in sales (9 %) and other unskilled occupations. In particular, Tajik workers in the construction sector were exposed to illegality without work permits, while only 52 percent were legally employed (Danzer & Ivaschenko, 2009).

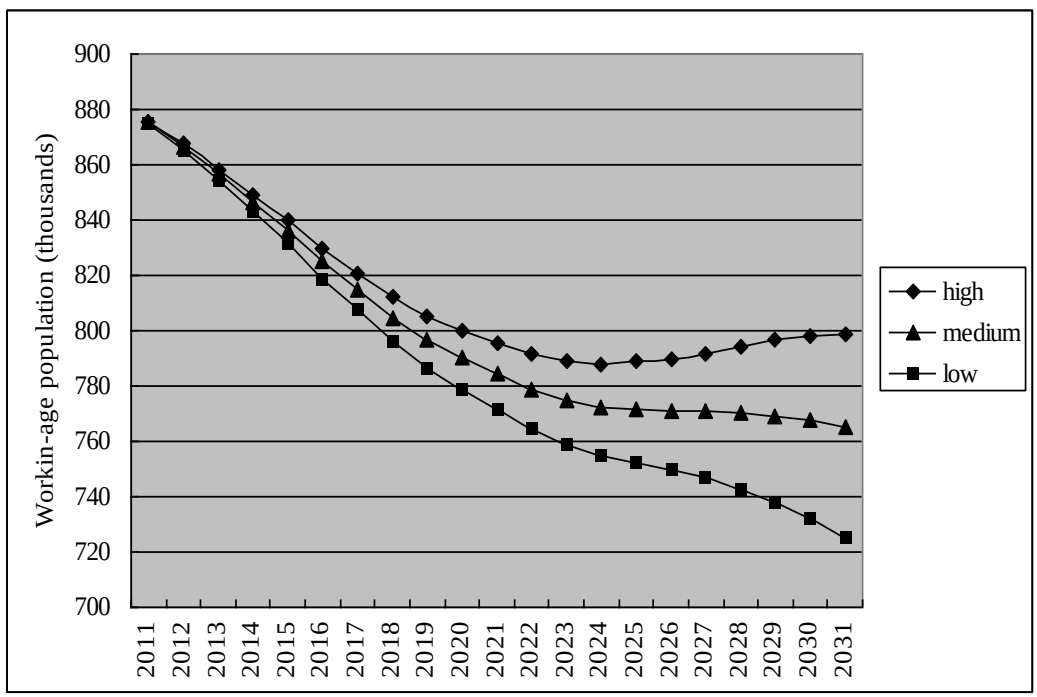
Recent statistics, both from international organizations and the Russian Federation, implies that the main stream of immigration in the Russian Federation is increasing the influx of foreign workers, while simultaneously decreasing political and ethnic migrants. Those who migrate and want to work in Russia tend to stay temporarily, not reside permanently, concentrating in certain industrial sectors.

2.3. Depopulation and Demand for Labor Force in the Russian Federation

The issue of immigration in the Russian Federation has been closely linked to a decreasing national population for the last two decades. The total population in Russia has steadily decreased from 148.6 million in 1992 to 141.9 million in 2009 (*Russia in Figures 2010*). Sergey Stepashin, head of the Russian Federation Comptroller's Office, cites government estimates that the country's population will number 136.2 million in 2020 (Feshbach, 2008) and UN experts expect that the number will fall by 101.5 million in 2050 (*World Population to 2300*). A situation of natural decrease, where the number of deaths exceeds the number of births, already began in 1992 and has continued so far (*The Demographic Yearbook of Russia 2010*). Heleniak pointed out that this is because of a decline in the fertility rate and in life expectancy, as well as the inherent problem of age structure (Heleniak, 2001). In addition, Portyakov mentioned that it is a consequence of not only specific reforms in post-Soviet Russia, but social cataclysms that the country has lived through such as the Bolshevik revolution, the Civil war and heavy losses during the Second World War (Portyakov, 2008). The continuing depopulation in Russia will be inescapable for the foreseeable future.

In this circumstance, a decreasing working-age population will severely damage national development by losing the driving force in economic activities. The Federal State Statistics Service made a demographic projection for 2030 with three variants (*Projections of the Size of Population in the Russian Federation to 2030*). No matter which scenario is realized, it is unavoidable that the population of the working age will decline until the mid-2020s.

Figure 1. Progress of working age population in the Russian Federation with three cenarios



Source: Federal State Statistics Service

Moreover, it is feasible that the decreasing working age population will not be able to be supplemented by domestic migrants in any federal district except the Central

Federal District[13] where most internal migrants arrive (Ioffe & Zayonchkovskaya, 2010). In 2008, except for the Central Federal District and Northwestern Federal District[14], all 6 other districts of Russia faced internally negative net migration (*The Demographic Yearbook of Russia 2010*). Those districts only covered their migration outflow with migration inflow from foreign countries, while the excessive number of emigrants in the Far Eastern Federal District could not be replenished by foreign migrants. It is obvious that almost all districts will suffer from depopulation. However, this vacuum will not be necessarily filled by foreign migrants.

Table 7. Distribution of foreign workers in the Russian Federation by regions (percentage)

	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Russian Federation	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Central Federal District	43.2	46.0	47.8	44.4	43.0	41.4
Northwestern Federal District	7.4	8.0	7.2	8.4	8.4	9.4
Southern Federal District	8.6	4.6	4.4	6.0	7.0	7.1
Volga Federal District	6.5	6.9	7.0	9.0	9.2	8.8
Ural Federal District	14.9	13.8	13.3	12.4	13.2	14.6
Siberian Federal District	7.0	9.4	9.1	11.3	11.9	11.2
Far Eastern Federal District	12.4	11.2	11.3	8.6	7.2	7.5

Source: Regions of Russia. Social and Economic Indicators 2010

Foreign workers have been concentrated in the Central Federal District. It implies that the population density is not always the most reliable indicator of labor shortage,

[13] The Central Federal District is one of the eight federal districts of Russia, located in the western part of the country. It is comprised of Moscow, Moscow oblast and other 16 oblasts.

[14] The Central Federal District and the Northwestern Federal District are often described as European Russia or Western Russia. Saint Petersburg, Leningrad oblast and 9 other oblasts constitute the Northwestern Federal District.

because the demographic situation in the Central Federal District is much more severe than in the Far East due to the low rate of natural increase (-5.8 per 1000 versus 1.0 per 1000 in 2008) and the higher share of retired people (23.9 versus 17.1) (Ioffe & Zayonchkovskaya, 2010)[15]. In this situation, about half of the people migrating in Russia settle in Moscow and Moscow Oblast (Herd, 2003). This is because they are attracted by the structural labor shortage, a higher income per capita, and better living standards (Light, 2010).

On the other hand, the Far Eastern Federal District has a relatively small number of foreign workers in spite of having the lowest population density. Prosvirnov pointed out that the population of the Far East is as large as the local economy since a lot of plants and factories stopped working under the ongoing reform (Prosvirnov, 2007). In other words, depopulation and a shortage of labor in Russia have been already pulling workers from foreign countries, but the foreign migrants are not heading for the areas from which people have just left.

Foreign workers in the Russian Federation have been converging to unskilled and low-paying jobs such as construction, trade and services.[16] This could be attributed to the fact that Russia still remains an economically developing country due to its intrinsic economic structure relying on natural resource exports and lack of manufacturing industries.

[15] The Central Federal District has the highest population density (57.1 per square kilometer), while the Far East has merely one person per square kilometer, see Demographic Yearbook of Russia 2009.

[16] The full name of the category 'Trade and services' is 'Wholesale and retail trade, maintenance of vehicles, motorcycle, household products and personal items'.

Table 8. Distribution of foreign workers in the Russian Federation by types of economic activities (percentage) [17]

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Agriculture, hunting, forestry	7.3	7.2	6.5	6.6
Manufacturing activity	6.9	7.1	7.1	9.9
Construction	38.7	40.8	40.2	42.0
Trade and services	30.4	26.7	19.2	17.0
Transport and Communication	4.7	4.6	4.4	3.9
Real estate activities, rent and service	0.7	0.5	2.3	3.9
Other public, social and personal services	1.9	2.4	4.8	4.3
Other types of economic activities	9.4	10.7	15.5	12.4

Source: Labour and Employment in Russia 2007, 2009

In 2008 approximately 5 million Russian men were also engaged in construction, along with 1 million foreign workers.[19] Therefore, the biased occupations among foreign workers should be understood in terms of the economy structure in Russia and changes in its members caused by depopulation and the decline of working-age people. Naturally, Russian employers would be likely to hire foreign workers who can endure low wages and social status.

Current immigration in post-Soviet Russia is a natural phenomenon and will

[17] It is difficult to integrate data of 2001-2004 to this table because of different categorizations of economic activities. Still, the construction sector had the most foreign workers in the past two decades with trade and manufacturing activities. See, table 5.20. in Labour and Employment in 2005.

[19] In 2008, the most concentrated industrial sector among Russian men was manufacturing activities (19%) followed by transport and communication (13%), and construction (12%). In terms of Russian women, trade and services was the popular (18%) followed by education (15%) and manufacturing activities (14%) (*Labour and Employment in Russia 2009*). Consequently, Russian workers are sharing the portions with foreign workers without clear or defined boundaries.

continue, as long as the national population and working-age people decrease. The country, as a receiving country, is pulling foreign migrants mainly from neighboring countries because of the shortage of labor. Foreign migrants who want to work in Russia are highly concentrated in unskilled, low paying and low status jobs. This is because job vacancies in Russia occur from the bottom of the hierarchy that native workers are not drawn towards. Thus, Russian employers have an incentive to hire foreign workers who can endure such a low social status at a relatively cheaper price, whether they are legal or illegal migrants. Nonetheless, several intervening factors have had the immigration flow in Russia remaining at an early stage.

3. Chinese Migration in the Russian Far East

3.1. Depopulation in the Russian Far East

The Russian Far East is no exception to the widespread decreasing population, rather it is much more devastating because of the low population density in the vastest district of Russia, occupying more than 36 (6216 thousand square kilometers) percent of the national territory, but accommodating less than 5 percent of the total population (6460 thousand people on the first January 2009). The population in the Russian Far East has steadily decreased for the last two decades.

Table 9. Population size in the Russian Federation by region[20]

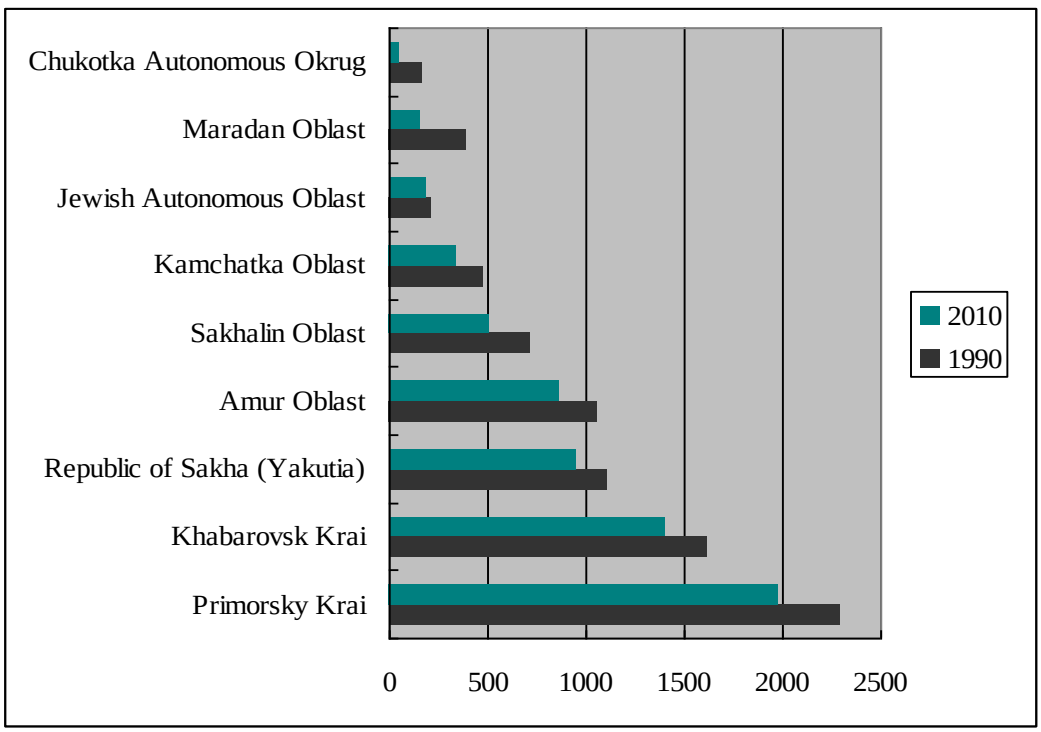
	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Russian Federation (in thousands)	**148460**	**146890**	**143474**	**142754**	**142221**	**142009**	**141904**
Central Federal District	38115	38228	37546	37357	37218	37151	37122
Northwestern Federal District	14864	14324	13731	13628	13550	13501	13462
Southern Federal District	22284	22743	22821	22790	22777	22835	22902
Volga Federal District	32082	31703	30710	30511	30346	30241	30158
Ural Federal District	12636	12515	12279	12244	12231	12241	12255
Siberian Federal District	20961	20464	19794	19677	19590	19553	19545
Far Eastern Federal District	**7518**	**6913**	**6593**	**6547**	**6509**	**6487**	**6460**
Natural Increase (a person)	-17953	-23938	-24890	-16350	-7466	-6569	-1790
Net Migration rate (per 10,000)	-49	-188	-83	-32	-33	-23	-31

Source: Federal State Statistics Service

[20] The data used in this table is derived from publications by the Federal State Statistics Service, "Demographic Yearbook of Russia 2010" and "Statistical Yearbook of Russia 2010". The net migration in each district is computed as a ration of net migration to the midyear resident population according to the current estimate, while changes of population size by regions are the records of 1st January each year. Therefore, the total annual decrease, including natural increase and net migration rate, does not correctly equal the changes of population size in the Far Eastern Federal District.

With the natural decrease of local populations, long lasting migration outflows toward Western Russia or other countries have exacerbated the situation of the Russian Far East. During the period 1990-2010, the region lost approximately 1.6 million people and in particular, northern territories in the Russian Far East experienced a relatively far more severe depopulation due to having the lowest population density.[21]

Figure 2. Depopulation in the Russian Far East during 1990-2010 (in thousands)



Source: Statistical Yearbook of Russia 2010

[21] The northern regions have a much lower density than the average of the entire Far Eastern regions (1.0 per square kilometer); Chukotka Autonomous Okrug (0.1), Maradan Oblast (0.4), Kamchatka Oblast (0.7) and Republic of Sakha (0.3), see Demographic Yearbook of Russia 2009.

Prosvirnov pointed out that "Amur region's population fell because the inbound stream had nearly dried up suddenly, rather than because of increasing outflow" (Prosvirnov, 2007). Kontorovich also mentioned that if the number of arrivals to the Far East remained at the 1989 level there would be a small positive net migration (Kontorovich, 2000). For most of the Soviet Period, the predominant internal migration pattern was outward from the central core in Western Russia to the periphery regions of the North, East Siberia, West Siberia, and the Far East (Heleniak, 2001). However, decentralization and the economic restructuring of post-Soviet Russia changed the migration stream reversely. The cost of production, transportation and labor increased, incentives and subsides from the central government were cut off, and living conditions in the Far East deteriorated (Herd, 2003). The magnitude of the situation was reflected by Russian immigration policy to attract mainly Russians and Russian speakers from former Soviet republics. Still, the compatriots and CIS migrants do not see the Russian Far East as a destination where even Russians born in the North and the Far East have left (Balzer & Repnikova, 2010). Harsh climates, uncomfortable living conditions, a higher cost of living, and long travel distances to anywhere in Russia have discouraged people from settling in the Russian Far East (Prosvirnov, 2007). The recent pilot programs in Primorsky Krai, Khabarovsk Krai and Amur Oblast to attract compatriots living abroad by creating jobs also appears to have had no significant effect so far (Motrich & Naiden, 2009).

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the Federal State Statistics Service projected the same demographic prospect for 2030 with three variants in the Russian

Far East. The projection with the medium variant demonstrates that the region will suffer from a decreasing population by 2030, losing about 530 thousand local people. In addition, the working-age population will drop from 4.1 in 2011 to 3.4 million people at the beginning of 2031. Negative migration increase in the region will gradually decrease due to the depletion of the population. Consequently, the demographic perspective in the Russian Far East is quite pessimistic.

Even though the Russian Federation has been facing the problem of depopulation throughout the country, abundant natural resources and the geopolitical significance of the Russian Far East invoked considerable concerns about losing control over the region.

In these circumstances, Chinese migrants have been considered as those who can threaten national security and interests, take local jobs, natural resources, and even territorial sovereignty. This is because the Northeastern provinces of China bordering the Russian territory had nearly 108.7 million people in 2008, which is 16.8 times the population of the Russian Far East for the same period.[22] The great population differential was exaggerated by Russian politicians and the media, saying that there would be a massive Chinese infiltration to the contiguous Russian territories.

To understand the close link between depopulation and Chinese migration in the Russian Far East, it should be examined in the context of the general immigration phenomenon dealt with in the previous chapter, figuring out the specific aspects and idiosyncrasies of Chinese migrants.

[22] Northeast China consists of three provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning. In 2008, their population was 43.2, 27.3, and 38.2 million people, respectively, see China Statistical Yearbook 2009.

3.2. Chinese Immigration to the Russian Far East

Chinese migration traces back to the second half of the nineteenth century, when the Russian Far East was governed by the Tsarist Empire. The Chinese who came to the nearby Russian territories temporarily and seasonally worked in farming, fishing, hunting, and mining, or settled for a long time (Alexeeva, 2008). The Russian government was in favor of the Chinese inflow contributing toward economic development in the desolate region, but on the other hand it was worrisome that they might claim ownership of the territory which belonged to China before the Treaty of Aigun in 1858 and the Treaty of Beijing in 1860 (Wishnick, 2005). After the 1917 Revolution, the number of Chinese migrants considerably decreased. Most Chinese left the territory and some Chinese were forcibly expelled from the region by the late 1930s (Alexeeva, 2008). In fact, the Russian Far East was closed to Chinese people until the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Since the normalization of post-Soviet Russo-Sino relations and the opening of borders in the 1990s, Chinese started to move into the Russian Far East again.[23] Newly coming Chinese migrants were various in terms of status, occupation, residence, age and gender. In general, they can be categorized into three major streams: workers, traders and students (Balzer & Repnikova, 2010).[24]

[23] Regarding the development of Russo-Sino relations in the post-Soviet era, see Garver (1998), Garnett (2001), and Wishnick (2001).

[24] There are various categorizations of Chinese migrants. For example, the International Organization for Migration singles out three main categories of the Chinese leaving the country; people going abroad to study or for field practice, people going abroad for permanent residence, and people going abroad as temporary labor migrants (Portyakov, 2006). Also, Larin (2005) noticed that

Table 10. Legal foreign workers in Amur Oblast by countries (a person)

	1995	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total	**3984**	**3759**	**6439**	**9233**	**9120**	**13042**	**18454**	**26671**	**31319**	**27950**
CIS countries	**2171**	**592**	**589**	**727**	**1219**	**1402**	**1884**	**2981**	**3437**	**3945**
Ukraine	1254	504	506	496	773	613	723	766	818	780
Kyrgyzstan	10	7	17	27	124	340	569	1123	1249	1406
Armenia	365	23	-	73	116	182	175	235	277	288
Georgia	202	16	3	7	13	12	21	22	12	5
Kazakhstan	87	7	5	8	23	22	12	27	33	43
Uzbekistan	77	19	42	93	136	173	276	569	717	925
Moldova	66	14	13	18	30	48	71	84	87	162
other countries	**1813**	**3167**	**5850**	**8506**	**7901**	**11640**	**16570**	**23690**	**27882**	**24005**
China	699	468	2397	5237	5907	8390	13129	19452	23567	20067
DPRK	1112	2698	3450	3269	1994	3250	3440	4237	4168	3700

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Amur Oblast 2010

The rapidly increasing number of Chinese workers has been the most distinct feature of Chinese migration trends for the last ten years. For instance, Chinese workers have overwhelmingly dominated in Amur Oblast, accounting for more than 70 percent of the total foreign workers. The actual number of Chinese workers increased by 30 times from 1995 but the relative number over the total local labor market is still insignificant. Indeed, Chinese workers occupied only 4.8 percent of the local labor market in 2009. Apart from this, it should be investigated where they are working, and why they come to the region.

Chinese come to Russia through three official channels: tourism, contract work and business. In this study, I follow the classification used by Balzer and Repnikova (2010), focusing on occupation that migrants have and thinking that it will be proper to structural approach.

Table 11. Distribution of legal Chinese workers in Amur Oblast by types of economic activities (percentage)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Agriculture, hunting, forestry	6.3	39.0	36.5	35.2	34.0
Construction	21.9	24.2	26.8	35.0	40.3
Trade and services	29.0	25.3	25.0	17.7	10.8
Other types of economic activities	42.8	11.5	11.7	12.1	14.9

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Amur Oblast 2010

They officially work in construction, agriculture, hunting and forestry - where unskilled labor is needed. The pattern of Chinese workers in Amur Oblast is consistent with the general trend of immigration in the Russian Federation. Structural labor shortages pull foreign workers from the bottom of the class where native workers start to move. Interestingly, lots of Chinese workers are engaged in agriculture and the lumbering industry due to the characteristics of local economic activities. Meanwhile, economic activities in which local people are working are diversely distributed such as trade, transportation, agriculture, education, and social services.

A similar phenomenon can be found in other regions of the Russian Far East. Recently, the number of foreign workers has increased in both Primorsky Krai and Khabarovsk Krai, and Chinese workers account for 49.2% and 35.9% among them, respectively. These figures are relatively small compared with the number of total labor makers in the regions, which are only 2% and 1.7%.

Table 12. Legal foreign workers in Primorsky Krai and Khabarovsk Krai by selected countries (a person)

	Primorsky Krai					Khabarovsk Krai				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total	**23268**	**37900**	**30923**	**32575**	**43743**	**9918**	**13643**	**25062**	**32453**	**34147**
CIS countries	**2426**	**2695**	**4975**	**10265**	**14998**	**2294**	**3617**	**8097**	**14325**	**15394**
Uzbekistan	903	1101	3023	7006	10832	137	186	1976	5306	5939
Ukraine	372	352	275	362	800	1501	2233	2483	2499	2559
Armenia	480	580	580	815	970	234	457	801	1122	1097
other countries	**20842**	**35205**	**25948**	**22310**	**28745**	**7624**	**10026**	**16948**	**18106**	**18742**
China	14669	24410	18358	16016	21518	3812	5258	9347	10889	12249
DPRK	4442	8417	6537	5485	5988	2107	2710	4507	4342	4067
Vietnam	1568	2206	930	642	962	917	926	1818	1755	1737

Source: Social and Economic Situation of Primorsky Krai 2009, Statistical Yearbook of Khabarovsk Krai 2010

In Primorsky Krai, most foreign workers are engaged in construction (41.8%) followed by agriculture, hunting and forestry (17.9%), manufacturing activity (12%), and trade (12%). Of course, it is difficult to believe that these numbers accurately reflect the volume of foreign workers, considering that there are illegal workers that national and regional statistics can not capture. Nonetheless, the increasing number of Chinese workers implies that it is a natural and inevitable phenomenon in the Russian Far East as it faces the problem of depopulation.

The Far East will continue to need a foreign work force by all means. Chinese dominance in the Russian Far East can be attributed to the advantage of geographic

proximity and relatively small inflows of CIS migrants heading for other Russian territories, especially Western Russia. Most Chinese workers coming to the country are unskilled and occupy the bottom of the hierarchy where a shortage of labor force is likely to come first. Still, the number of Chinese workers appears to be insignificant when compared to the local labor market. Even though there are lots of illegal and unknown foreign workers, it will be difficult to find them in other types of jobs as long as they remain unidentified.

Chinese traders in Russia are diverse: from day traders coming to Russian border cities without visas for just one day (Pirchner, 2008) to wholesale merchants participating in Russian markets. In particular, massive Chinese shuttle traders with a couple of suitcases entered Russian territories as tourists after the 'visa-free group tourism' agreement in 1992 (Larin, 2005) and considerably contributed to the Russian Far Eastern economy, supplying consumer goods and food (Gelbras, 2002). Furthermore, there has been increasing border trade between the Chinese North East and the Russian Far East. Heilongjiang Province's trade with the Russian Far East rapidly increased from 2002 to 2007 due to the export of ordinary consumer goods, especially textile clothing and footwear (Hiraizumi, 2010). Between 2001 and 2006, the share of Chinese goods imported into the Amur region was almost three quarters of its total imports and China was responsible for 45.5% of Khabarovsk Territory's overall foreign trade in 2006 (Larin, 2008).

However, Chinese commercial activities in Russia have shrunk because of the

government's restrictive immigration policies. Legislation that took effect in 2007 prohibited foreigners' from selling directly at retail markets, forcing foreign traders to hire a Russian to handle the cash transactions or to move to an indoor kiosk if they still wanted to work (Balzer & Repnikova, 2010). In June 2009, Russian authorities shut down Chinese stores on the charge of sanitary and storage violations in Moscow's Cherkizovsky Market (Lei, 2009). The government also seized 5 billion dollars worth of Chinese goods, regarding them as illegally smuggled. The Chinese who protested the shutdown were deported or detained by local authorities, and one month later, 150 Chinese traders in the market were arrested as illegal immigrants. Soon afterwards, *Xinhua* reported that the Chinese government urged Russia to secure Chinese business activities in Russia and asked the Chinese to abide by local laws and regulations ("China urges Russia to protect Chinese businessmen's interests in Russia," 2009.07.09). However, Russian authorities did not exceptionally direct action against Chinese traders. Russian authorities have struggled with smuggling and illegal commercial activities that not only deprive them of their tax revenue, but also hamper domestic producers. Therefore, Chinese business in Russia will be more legally regulated under the supervision of the Russian government. In practice, Russia and China decided to construct a new shopping complex instead of Cherkizovsky Market (Sudakov, 2009). The Amur government also designed to build several shopping centers for lease to Chinese merchants because Chinese traders are essential for the regional economy (Prosvirnov, 2009; Ryzhova & Ioffe, 2009).

Chinese traders have, moreover, been reluctant to operate businesses constantly in the Russian Far East. Chinese coming to Russia have high mobility and seasonal natures of migration (Nyiri, 2003). Balzer and Repnikova pointed out that "traders who remain in the Russian Far East tend to be the least entrepreneurial of the Chinese engaged in trade and the more ambitious and successful move on to Western Russia or European countries" (Balzer & Repnikova, 2010). In other words, numerous Chinese traders are entering the Russian Far East to earn money quickly, seeing its territories as a stepping-stone, not a destination, to leave for more favorable places. In addition, Chinese traders are interested in sustaining their scale because competition within them is also severe, fighting for trading space, scarce resources, and finite demand on the part of the Russian consumer (Abelsky, 2006). Russian corrupt officials, policemen and gangs make Chinese commercial activities more insecure and make the traders reluctant to participate in Russian markets.

The Chinese merchants in the Russian Far East have been limited and more or less stable, except for trade businesses near border regions where cross-border economic activities are inevitable for their regional development. Consequently, as long as unfavorable atmosphere for Chinese economic activities in Russia exist, it is hard to imagine that traders will be the main stream of Chinese migration. For the moment, they regard Russia as a transit country for making money, not a destination of hope or longevity.

4. Chinese Emigration from the Chinese Northeastern Region

4.1. Overview of International Migration in China

After the economic reform in China in the 1990s, the number of people crossing borders dramatically increased because of the privatization of state-owned companies (Shen, 2010). At the same time, the number of inter-regional migrants also rapidly increased due to wage differentials between regions. The movement of population began not only domestically but also internationally, as people lost their jobs or found better opportunities and left their hometowns. The Government's institutional changes also enabled Chinese people to become more mobile. For example, the introduction of ID cards in the mid-1980s and the simplification of passport regulations in the early twenty-first century made it much easier for individuals to move (Biao, 2007). Moreover, over the last thirty years the Chinese government has taken a neutral stand on the matter of migration, neither ideological nor political (Biao, 2003).

In this favorable environment for migration, Shen figured out that Chinese migrants crossing the border have been concentrated in mainly Southeast Asian countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia, where significant Chinese communities have already been settled for a long time and are geographically contiguous to China. In addition, the traditional receiving countries for immigrants - like the USA, Canada, Australia and Western European countries - have also been destinations for Chinese migrants (Shen, 2010). However, there is no mention of Russia

as a destination for Chinese migrants. From a sending country's view, when deciding where to move, Russia is still a less popular destination for the Chinese.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to inspect the international movement of the population in China with official data. According to Zhu, Lin, Qi and Xia, there is no available data to use, even though a number of Chinese government departments have produced data or statistics related to international migration flows for different purposes. They do not conform to the definition of international migration and each data produced by them is not consistent (Zhu, Lin, Qi, & Xia, 2008). Nevertheless, it is possible to conceptualize a bigger picture of the latest internal and international migration pattern in China. Of course, this situation is not much different from that of northeast China.

4.2. Emigration from the Chinese Northeastern Region

To understand the Chinese inflow to the Russian Far East, it is necessary to examine migration circumstances in northeast China - made up of the provinces Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang, which are geographically most contiguous to the Russian territory. There has been some research and articles dealing with the emigration phenomenon in northeast China. Most of them point out that the main reason why local people are leaving these provinces is the deterioration of the regional economy. Northeast China, known as China's rustbelt, suffered from widespread layoffs when the Chinese government shut down loss-making state-owned enterprises in the late 1990s. At that time, urban workers from north-eastern China came to European countries to find well-paid jobs and improve their income (Thunø, 2003). For example, France has

been one of the preferred destinations for Chinese migrants in Europe. According to Carine Guerassimoff, a lot of Chinese migrants arrived from north-eastern China to France in the mid-1990s, supported by Chinese networks that had already settled there (Guerassimoff, 2003). For Italy, those who were better educated and lived in the urban centers of the north-eastern Chinese provinces started to arrive in Italy, looking for employment after the restructuring of state enterprises and administrative agencies in their hometown (Ceccagno, 2003). It is notable that a high proportion of migrants from the three provinces were well educated people living in urban areas (Biao, 2007). On the other hand, other Chinese workers from these provinces moved to the countries in which it was easy to connect with Chinese networks or to countries which had similarities in terms of culture and language such as Singapore, South Korea, and Japan.

These facts show that regarding Chinese migration, how Chinese network, culture and language are important in deciding the destination of migration. In this sense, Russia has been not an ideal destination for the Chinese leaving their hometown to find a job, run a business or start a new life. They chose their destination to migrate on the basis of whether they can enjoy a better standard of living or increase their earnings.

For about the past decade, these provinces have enjoyed an economic boom thanks to the Chinese government's support and increased demand for products of heavy industry. However, in the first three quarters of 2014, the economy growth in these provinces dramatically declined again and ranked in the bottom five in terms of GDP growth among the 31 provinces in China (The Economist, 2015). Nevertheless, no

matter how the economic situation or unemployment rate changes in north-eastern China, Russia - including the far eastern area - has little attraction as a migration destination for the Chinese because the receiving country does not guarantee a higher income or a better life. Moreover, some obstacles are limiting the Chinese inflow to Russian territory.

4.3. Obstacles to Chinese Migration in the Russian Far East

In fact, migrating into the Russian Far East might give some economic incentives to the Chinese living in the north eastern provinces. Even though it is difficult to collect and compare the statistics from both sides facing the border, Richard Lotspeich tried to compare them in terms of unemployment rate, real wages, and income per capita. He observed that the economic conditions which is a relatively higher unemployment rate and income per capita in the labor market on the Russian side, except an increase in real wages, turned out in favor of labor migration from north eastern China to the Russian Far East (Lotspeich, 2010). However, it should be considered that the real income of the population in the Russian Far East is still worse due to the growth of consumption prices (Motrich & Naiden, 2009). Moreover, since the official unemployment rate in China has been too stable to perhaps fully believe, maintaining the level within 4.0-4.3% for more than a decade, it cannot be a crucial indicator for understating the economic condition on the Chinese side (Economist, 2015). In this circumstance, there is no guarantee of economic incentives for migration to the Russian Far East; rather obstacles to prevent the movement in the receiving country are much greater - such as xenophobia

and restrictive immigration policies in Russia.

One of the most important factors limiting Chinese inflow to the Russian Far East is a negative view and attitude towards migrants in Russia. According to "Monitoring the Social Sphere of Russia" in 2008, the annual national survey conducted by the Russian State Sociological University, 43% responded that it is not necessary to overcome the shortage of population and labor force through the use of temporary migrant workers (44.6% responded it is necessary) and 72.6% also disagreed with attracting migrants for permanent residence to supplement it (Noskova, 2009). The residents of Amur Oblast directly involved in this issue showed optimistic and pessimistic attitudes equally to the Chinese inflow, but in other regions more than half the respondents appeared to be anxious and 83% respondents were against illegal Chinese migrants (Larin, 2005).

In this context, Caress Schenk argues that immigration policies in Russia have been driven by ethnic nationalism, which spreads its anti-migrants attitudes through media and discriminatory policies, protecting the Russian labor market from foreign workers (Schenk, 2010). For instance, since 2007, foreigners have been banned from working in the retail sector and the introduction of the quota system limited the number of foreign workers. The Russian government launched the state program to entice Russians living abroad by giving various benefits, but this turned out to be unsuccessful.

In 2012, the Russian president approved the "Concept of the State Migration Policy for the Period Until 2025" for the purpose of strengthening control over

migration while simplifying procedures for legal labor migrants (Roudik, 2013). Russia's immigration policies have been developed to be easier to monitor and control migration, but on the other hand regulating migration inflow lowers labor mobility. Moreover, since December 2012, to obtain work permits foreign labor workers have to prove their Russian language ability by passing a special test or presenting a certificate (Roudik, 2013). It makes foreign workers more reluctant to work in Russia, especially those who cannot speak Russian language and have a different culture or religion: like the Chinese people.

5. Conclusion

The Russian Far East has suffered from chronic depopulation due to natural decreases and the emigration of local people, losing significant working-age people. Since Northeast China, which faces the Russian Far East, has a relatively higher population, the notion of 'Chinese Expansion' or 'Yellow Peril' has been widespread in Russian society through the media and statements given by politicians. However, the exaggerated threat against the Chinese inflow was moderated and balanced by examining the number of Chinese migrants and its focus turned towards the possibility of regional economic cooperation between the two countries.

As a receiving country, the Russian Far East has been pulling its labor force from abroad since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is impossible for the shortage of labor, caused by depopulation in these regions, to be supplemented by domestic migration or

Russian compatriots. In particular, certain industrial sectors - such as construction - continue to require an unskilled and low paying foreign workforce to maintain the local economy. A number of Chinese people living in north eastern provinces contiguous to the Russian Far East could be an alternative to fill these vacancies. However, strong nationalism and xenophobia society spread by the media and political statements have had an influence on establishing immigration policies in Russia, thus making them more restrictive. Current immigration policies in Russia, therefore, do not reflect the demographic realities (Schenk, 2010).

On the other hand, as a sending county, Northeast China has enjoyed a favorable environment for migration since the economic reform in the 1990s. Economic circumstances and institutional changes have helped Chinese people move abroad much more easily than before. Nevertheless, they have not regarded the Russian Far East as a destination for migration. Chinese migrants have been mostly concentrated on Southeast Asian countries where it is advantageous to settle and find a job by means of Chinese networks. Otherwise, they have left for a better life in developed countries such as the USA, Australia and Western European countries. Russia is relatively far down the priority list for the Chinese.

In summary, the push and pull factors in Chinese migration to the Russian Far East have failed to satisfy each other, so far. In fact, the Russian government implementing restrictive immigration policies is more responsible for liking migration flows from the sending country to the receiving country because as long as government policies

maintain their anti-migrants attitude, it is hard to envisage how the current situation will be improved. If the current depopulation phenomenon in Russia continues until 2030, as the Russian Federal State Statistics Service expects, the Russian Far East will likely remain desolate.

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국문 초록

러시아 극동지역의 인구감소와 중국인 이주 :

수용국과 송출국간의 연결

1990 년대 러시아와 중국간 국경이 개방된 이래, 중국인들은 러시아 극동지역으로 이동해왔다. 그간 러시아 극동지역내 중국인 수가 증가하는 것에 대해 러시아 정치인들은 물론 언론 및 방송 등 매체들도 불안감을 보여왔다. 특히, '황화론'을 뒷받침할 만한 근거가 없음에도 불구하고, 중국인들이 인구가 감소하고 있는 러시아 극동지역으로 들어와 영토를 차지할 것으로 묘사되기도 했다. 본 논문은 중국인들이 왜 러시아 극동지역으로 오는가에 대한 질문을 통해 러시아 극동지역과 중국 동북 3 성간 인구 이동에 있어 'push-pull' 요소들을 분석한다. 러시아 극동지역은 소비에트 연방 해체와 함께 인구감소로 인한 노동력 부족으로 해외 노동력 공급이 필요한 상황이다. 반면, 중국 동북 3 성은 1990 년대 경제개혁 및 제도적 변화를 통해 역내 인구의 국내외 이주가 유리한 환경이 조성되었다. 하지만 러시아의 제한적인 이주 정책과 외국인에 대한 배타적인 사회 분위기는 중국인들의 이주에 큰 장애요소이다. 또한, 러시아 극동지역으로 이동시 기대되는 경제적 이익이 불확실하고, 러시아내 중국인 네트워크 형성이 미약한 상황에서 언어, 문화적 제약도 중국인들의 러시아 극동지역 이주를 어렵게 만들고 있다.

주요어 : 러시아 극동, 인구감소, 중국인 이주, 황화론

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